

REMARKS

Claims 1-15, 38 and 40-42 remain pending. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Applicants hereby affirm the election of Invention I directed to the apparatus claims, claims 1-15 and 38-42. Claims 16-37 and 39 have been canceled. Independent claim 1 has been amended slightly to more succinctly claim the invention. Independent claim 38 has been amended so as to include the limitations of claim 39.

Claims 1-10, 15 and 38-41 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by Seguin (WO 97/46174). The Examiner points out that the number of peaks in the central section of the cited reference are different than the number of peaks in the distal and proximal sections, but fails to address the fact that both rejected independent claims specifically call for the difference in the number of peaks to be selected so as to provide additional material for apposing a side branch vessel. While the Figures actually teach away from an increased number of peaks in the central region - Fig. 1 of the cited reference actually shows a smaller number of peaks (5) in the central region than in the distal region (6), while Fig. 8 shows an identical number (5), the differentiation between the rings of the central and distal regions is described as being limited to width and cross-section, length and angles (see col 3, lines 18-26 of corresponding U.S. Patent No. 6,068,655). No suggestion is made to rely on a difference in the **number** of peaks to increase the amount of material in the central section for apposing a side branch vessel. It is respectfully submitted that obviousness, let alone anticipation, is therefore clearly avoided.

Claims 11-14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as obvious over Seguin (U.S. Patent No. 6,068,655) in view of Guruwaiya (U.S. Patent No. 6,251,136). In light of the non-obviousness of the underlying independent claim as was argued above, it is respectfully submitted that all claims depending therefrom similarly avoid obviousness.

Claims 42 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as obvious over Seguin. In light of the non-obviousness of the underlying independent claim as was argued above, it is respectfully submitted that all claims depending therefrom similarly avoid obviousness.

In light of the above amendments and remarks, applicants earnestly believe the application to now be in condition for allowance and respectfully request that it be passed to issue.

The commissioner is authorized to charge any deficiencies in fees or credit any overpayments to our Deposit Account No. 06-2425.

Respectfully submitted,

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